

Nation High School Rodeo Championship traveling trophy is on display at the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food building. Utah's high school rodeo team was crowned national champions in 2003. This marks the fourth title Utah has won out of the past 10 years. Utah has won the title three times in the past four years. Way to go!

Recent winners:

1994— Texas	1999— Texas
1995— Louisiana	2000— Utah
1996— Utah	2001— Utah
1997— Oklahoma	2002— Texas
1998— Texas	2003— Utah

(right) A member of the Utah championship team presented Commissioner Peterson with the 2003 N. H.S.R.A. finals team trophy. The trophy will remain at the department through the year



(left) The T.R. Sprague Memorial National High School Rodeo Association finals team trophy was won by Utah in 2003. It is on display in the Administrative Services area of the Agriculture building.



NEWS FROM USDA National Agricultural Statistical Service

From: Richard Kestle, State Statistician

Utah's 2003 apple, apricot, tart cherry, sweet cherry, peach, and pear utilized production estimates were up significantly from the freeze damaged crop of 2002, according to the Utah Agricultural Statistics Service.

Utilized production for 2003 was as follows: apples, 22.0 million pounds, 15.5 million pounds more than 2002; apricots, 160 tons, 30 tons more than 2002; sweet cherries, 2,000 tons, 1,620 tons more than 2002; tart cherries, 26.0 million pounds, 23.2 million pounds more than 2002; peaches, 8.7 million pounds, 2.3 million pounds more than 2002; and pears, 380 tons, 30 tons more than 2002.

Value of production for Utah's 2003 fruit crop and change from 2002 were as follows: apples, \$5.1 million, up \$3.7 million; apricots, \$94,000 up \$2,000; sweet cherries, \$1.8 million up \$1.2 million; tart cherries, \$7.0 million; up \$6.4 million; peaches, \$3.4 million, up 1.4 million; and pears, \$298,000, up \$73,000.

2003 Final Crop Production Estimates
Utah 2003, all wheat production at 5.6 million bushels was up 14.2 percent from 2002. Average yield of 41.4 bushels per acre was 5.4 bushels above 2002. Acres harvested was 135,000, down 1,000 acres from 2002. Winter wheat production at 5.1 million bushels was up 17.1 percent from the 2002 level. Winter wheat yield at 41 bushels per acre was 6 bushels above 2002. Harvested acreage of 125,000 acres was the same as a year earlier.

Utah Grain Stocks

December 1, 2003 stocks of corn, and wheat at off-farm locations in Utah were higher than on December 1, 2002, according to the Utah Agricultural Statistics Service. Barley stocks at off-farm locations were lower than last year.

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Utah Governor
Utah Commissioner of Agriculture
and Food
Deputy Commissioner
Public Information Officer

Olene S. Walker
Cary G. Peterson

Kyle R. Stephens
Larry Lewis

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BSE (mad cow)

Q. What is the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food doing to protect Utah's beef supply?

A. Utah does not have BSE and never has. The meat from the infected cow that went into the food system did NOT contain any of the contaminated material from the Washington cow. State Veterinarian, Dr. Mike Marshall says, "The risk to human health is extremely low, considering that no "Specific Risk Material" such as head, brain or spinal cord tissue from the Washington cow made it into the food system."

Every beef or dairy cow that is slaughtered for human consumption or other reasons in Utah is inspected for a variety of animal diseases, including bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or Mad Cow disease. Diseased animals are removed from the system and tested.

Q. If BSE is found only in the brain and spinal cord does that mean you need to eat the brain or spinal cord to become sick, or does the BSE leak into other parts of the cow during the butchering and packing process.

A. The infected material...brain, spinal cord, distal ileum, etc. is removed prior to processing for human consumption. The remaining muscle meat is considered to pose an extremely low health risk to humans since it is highly unlikely to contain any infected matter. In order for a human, or cow, to contract BSE, the person's genetic makeup must, unfortunately, be pre-configured to "catch" the infected prion found in the contaminated material. And a certain dose of the prion must be administered. Therefore a person must first have the genetic make up and consume brain or central nervous system matter to have a chance of becoming sick. The USDA and the UDAF spend billions of dollars each year to make sure that contaminated matter does not reach consumers.

Q. How is the disease transmitted from cow to cow?

A. It is not transmitted like a contagious disease. It is not a bacteria, nor virus. A cow must consume feed that contains brain or central nervous system material. It has been illegal to feed "ruminant material to ruminant" since Aug. of 1997. The cow found in Washington was born in April of 1997, four months prior to the feed ban.

USDA REPORTS NO RECALLED BSE (mad cow) BEEF IN UTAH

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has confirmed that none of the beef under the current BSE recall was distributed to retail stores in Utah. During the latest Technical Briefing with U.S. Government Officials on the BSE case, the USDA reported that approximately 80 percent of the recalled meat product was distributed in the states of Washington and Oregon. The remaining 20 percent was distributed to small retail outlets in six other states and one U.S. territory. They are: California, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii and the territory of Guam.

"The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food's meat inspection program has been awarded the USDA's highest possible rating—Category I. Few other states' inspection programs have earned this distinction," said Utah Commissioner of Agriculture, Cary G. Peterson.

For the latest information about BSE, visit:

<http://www.ag.state.ut.us/animind/bse.html> or,

<http://www.usda.gov/BSE/>



UDAF Emergency Response Trailer



(above) Brands Bureau Chief, Terry Menlove, inventories equipment in the department's emergency response trailer that would be used during an agricultural emergency.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recently awarded the UDAF a \$36,000 grant to purchase communications equipment for use during an agricultural emergency. The equipment will help Agriculture's first responders better coordinate efforts to prevent the spread of any animal disease to other animals or to humans. The communications equipment will also help the department protect the food supply, and protect Utah from the spread of a plant or pest infestation.